



Arizona Department of Public Safety

- For Immediate Release -

Friday, March 21, 2008

Arizona Department of Public Safety, as part of IIMPACT, helps bust two “drop houses” in two days *Several human smugglers are arrested during busts*

On March 19th, at approximately 11:25 p.m., Phoenix Police assisted IIMPACT detectives/agents with a search warrant at 9005 W. Royal Palm in Peoria on a drop house where undocumented immigrants were being held against their will. Upon entry, 15 males and 3 females were discovered in the residence. The on-scene investigation resulted in the arrest of 3 suspected human smugglers (coyotes). The three men were charged with extortion, kidnapping, aggravated assault and human smuggling.

On March 20th, at approximately 2:30 p.m., a school resource officer with the Phoenix Police Department was conducting a welfare check on two students from a nearby school district. The officer was lead to the address of 6318 S. 37th Lane to look for the students. Upon entering the residence he found one person asleep partially concealing a knife. He called for assistance. Other Officers arrived within minutes. Once the Officers arrived they found a total of 10 individuals, two identified as suspects (coyotes) and eight identified as undocumented aliens who were being held against their will in two bedrooms.

Additionally, one rifle, one pistol and a large knife were found which, according to the undocumented aliens, were being used to intimidate them.

Detectives from the joint agency Illegal Immigration Prevention and Apprehensive Co-op Unit (IIMPACT) arrived on scene to investigate.

The IIMPACT Detectives learned that several of the individuals had been beaten a number of times. They also had been forced at gun point to call their relatives to obtain money for their release. The group of eight had been at the location for more than four days. In both cases all UDA's with the exception of the “coyotes” are in the custody of ICE.

IIMPACT involves officers from the Arizona Department of Public Safety, Phoenix Police Department and the Immigration Customs Enforcement Section of the Federal Department of Homeland Security. IIMPACT investigates cases where undocumented aliens are kidnapped and extorted for money along with the use of weapons and violence/aggravated assaults to further victimize the UDA's.

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